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SUBJECT: SUDAN/CHAD: FM Lam Akol Provides Chad-Sudan  
Briefing; U.S.-EU Demarche

Ref: A) Khartoum 00938, B) State 60228, C) USEU Brussels

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¶1. (SBU) Summary: On April 23, Foreign Minister Lam Akol briefed the diplomatic corps on the state of Chad-Sudan bilateral relations. He outlined the events of the past several months, stating that Chad had made a series of statements and taken several actions that were not supported by evidence, and which harmed the longstanding relationship. Sudan wants a stable Chad, and is not working to destabilize Chad. Chad suffers from internal conflicts and is not participating in mechanisms established under the Tripoli Agreement designed to defuse tensions between the states. FM Akol expressed concern about Chad's treatment of its embassy and nationals, and noted that Chad had withdrawn from the Abuja peace talks on Darfur. After the presentation, Charge and EU presented demarche on Chad issues; Akol firmly rejected the allegation that Sudan was in any way supporting Chadian rebels. End summary.

U.S.-EU Demarche  
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¶2. (SBU) After the group briefing (see below), Charge, French Ambassador Robichon, and EC Ambassador Dagerfelt met separately with FM Akol to present demarche on Sudan/Chad. (French Amb. had contacted Charge on April 22 that she had instructions to proceed. AU did not join the demarche). After presentation of the points to the FM, Akol responded as follows:

-- With regard to U.S.-EU concern that Sudan is directly or indirectly supporting Chadian rebel groups, Akol said, "give us evidence of this support." He said this allegation presumes that Deby's accusations are accurate. He added that he hoped we are also making points to the Chadian president that he cease his support for the Darfur rebels. He reiterated what he had said in the larger meeting that Chad had refused to participate in the border security operations. These allegations, he said, were unacceptable to the Sudanese Government.

-- Akol also responded to the point that Sudan has an obligation to promote democratic stability in Chad. He rejected the point, saying it was none of Sudan's business to interfere in Chad's internal affairs.

-- On the point of an early UN assessment mission, Akol answered in now familiar terms. While Sudan continued to welcome the UN's humanitarian work in Darfur, the

government would not accept UN forces unless it was "part and parcel of a peace agreement," and that the mandate of such a UN force was agreed to by the parties and defined in a peace agreement. The transition from an AU to a UN force was not an issue the AU could mandate or engage in; this was a political matter that needed agreement of the government of Sudan. Discussions must take place directly between Sudan and the UN. The demand for a UN assessment team was therefore premature.

#### FM Briefing of Ambassadors

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13. (U) During a 30-minute briefing of approximately 60 diplomats, Foreign Minister Lam Akol outlined Sudan's views on the state of its bilateral relationship with Chad. He made the following points:

-- Chad's allegations are not new, although the scale and the steps taken may be so. These reflect internal differences within Chad.

-- Sudan wants a stable Chad, and seeks for all neighbors to be stable. Sudan stands to suffer if Chad's conflict spills over, with refugees entering Sudan and security problems taking place. Sudan's relations with Chad had been cordial, and the two states exchanged information and coordinated on policies. It is the task of a neutral state not to support rebels of a neighboring state.

-- Now, Chad is in trouble. The demands of President Deby's relatives have led to the present circumstances. He dismissed the Presidential Guard and closed the Chadian consulate in El Geneina and the Sudanese consulate in Abeche last November. Sudan wanted to send

KHARTOUM 00000972 002 OF 002

a delegation to discuss matters, and Chad refused. President Bashir tried to call President Deby; his efforts were met with excuses and no discussion took place.

-- Chad then accused Sudan of assisting rebels. FM Lam Akol talked to the Chadian foreign minister in Bamako during the Africa-France meeting, but the latter could not be forthcoming without instructions from his government.

-- As Chadian rebels approached Sudan in December, they were met at the border and offered two choices: disarm and enter under UNHCR protection as refugees, or remain in Chad.

-- At the African Union Peace and Security Council meeting in Addis Ababa in January, Chad repeated the same complaints against Sudan, without offering material evidence.

-- Sudan continues to stress the need for dialogue, although Chad continues to be hostile. President Deby had declared war against Sudan in late after an attack on Adre, but withdrew the declaration hours later.

-- In February, the Tripoli mini-summit, chaired by Qadafi and the African Union, two agreements were reached: an agreement on how to handle disputes, and a communique reflecting the outcome of the meetings. The relationship should have been normalized following this development. Political and military committees were to monitor the agreement; they agreed on the composition of forces, which involved Chad, Sudan, and others as witnesses. Teams were dispatched to El Geneina, El Fasher, and Abeche, although Chad did not send team participants. This occurred, he said, because Chad did not want others to see its support for rebels in Darfur.

-- Chad then took several actions: stating that Sudan was behind the attacks on Ndjamena; claiming that the attackers were Sudanese; severing diplomatic relations, asking Sudanese to leave the embassy and closing it; and declaring that genocide was taking place in Darfur, calling upon international organizations to become involved.

-- Sudan re-iterates that it has nothing against Chad. Sudan is the last to want to destabilize it. Chad has internal problems, and we cannot interfere. Sudan is trying to stick to the Tripoli Agreement. Chad can raise issues within the Agreement's context through the two committees. Sudan has sent representatives and is ready to interact. Sudan respects the sovereignty of other states and Chad is no exception. Sudan welcomes the Libyan initiative, and the need to cool down.

-- Sudan calls on the international community to support the Abuja peace process on Darfur. On the day following breaking diplomatic relations, Chad sent an armed group to enter Sudan's embassy in Ndjamena, despite Libya's serving as protecting power with a flag flying. Chad's public announcement that it would no longer be responsible for the security of Sudanese nationals in Chad was an open call to "do what you want to do" with Sudanese citizens. Sudan hopes that Chad will listen to logic and re-establish the longstanding ties between Chad and Sudan. Chad needs to look inside itself, and to listen to its own citizens. Chad would do well to deal with its conflict credibly, fostering better relations with the African Union, UN, and its neighbors.

14. (U) In response to questions, FM Akol noted that Chad had unilaterally severed diplomatic relations with Sudan. He also said that Chad was withdrawing its delegation from the Abuja peace talks; he noted that Chad was no longer an honest broker, and that Sudan had asked the African Union to drop it from the talks.

STEINFELD